“A Letter From Florence Somers Scull Regarding Colonel Richard Somers Day Book”
Transcribed by: Carla Welsh
8 NOV 2021

I have transcribed a letter written by Florence Townsend Somers Scull to Mr. R. Heber Breintnall, Adj. General, in Trenton, New Jersey, dated 7 MAR 1905. Within the letter, Florence transcribed items pertaining to the American Revolution that were written in Colonel Richard Somers’ Day Book, which at that time, was in her possession. It is unknown to me who has the Day Book now. There is a manuscript collection at the Atlantic County Historical Society in Somers Point, New Jersey, under Florence’s name, and I am not sure if the Day Book would be there. Of note, The Atlantic County Historical Society has an article from their 1984 yearbook entitled “Colonel Richard Somers Revolutionary Daybook,” Volume 10, Issue 1, and I do not know if all parts of the Day Book are transcribed there or not, but the yearbook is still for sale.

Florence Somers Scull was born in 1864 in Linwood, Atlantic County, New Jersey, the daughter of Dr. Job Braddock Somers and Louisa Corson, and died in 1944 in Somers Point, Atlantic County, New Jersey. She was married to Martin Van Buren Scull. Florence was a direct descendant of John Somers, the founder of Somers Point, New Jersey. She was a founding member of the Atlantic County Historical Society, and served there as Vice President. She was a member of several lineage societies, including Daughters of the American Revolution.

This letter is of value to me, because my 6th great-grandfather, Jeremiah Risley, is mentioned as serving as 2nd Lieutenant in the Gloucester County New Jersey militia. Also mentioned, is my 6th great-uncle, Zephaniah Steelman. Samuel Risley, Esquire, is mentioned, and he is my 7th great-uncle. Other Steelman distant relatives of mine are mentioned below, too. Jeremiah Risley was born 14 DEC 1734, Great Egg Harbor Township, and died 24 JUN 1796, Great Egg Harbor Township, Gloucester County, New Jersey. He was the son of Jeremiah and Dinah Risley (nee Gale), and his line continues back to Richard Risley, one of the founders of Hartford, Connecticut. Jeremiah was married to Margaret Doughty. Their son, Nathaniel Risley, also served in the Revolution, and Nathaniel is my 5th great-grandfather. He was married to Sarah Steelman, the daughter of Peter and Sarah Steelman (nee Beaston). The Steelman line continues back to Hans Mansson, a convict indentured servant that came to America in the 1600s from Sweden. Of note, all required paperwork is found for my line to join the National Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution under both Nathaniel Risley and Jeremiah Risley, as I am a direct descendant.

I found this letter scanned to FamilySearch.org, as a locked record, and it can only be accessed from a Family History Center or affiliated library. FamilySearch scanned the letter years ago from the New Jersey State Library in Trenton, New Jersey. The letter is scanned to DGS #7724451, images 881-887. Once you have logged into FamilySearch.org, go to “Catalog” and type “United States, New Jersey” and click “Search.” Scroll down to “United States, New Jersey - Military records - Revolution, 1775-1783 (26)” and click that, and then click “Revolutionary War Manuscripts, New Jersey numbers 1-10811.” From there, click the camera icon next to DGS #7724451, and go to image 881. And now, here is the letter:

2904 Pacific Avenue
Atlantic City, NJ
Mr. R. Heber Breintnall Adj. General
Trenton, NJ

Dear Sir,
I have looked over all the old family papers in my possession and I have copied verbatim anything which I thought might be of help or interest to you. The work has become so frail that in some cases is hardly legible.
Yours truly,
Florence Somers Scull
Mar. 7th, 1905

A list of the persons chose for Town Committee, Oct. 14, 1775:
John Somers, Senior, President
John Somers
James Somers, Esq.
Fredreck Steelman
Joseph Scull
John Scull
Samuel Risley, Esq.
Joseph Engerson
Lemuel Sayrs
Ameriah Lake
David Sayrs
Joseph Champion
Job Somers
Samuel Snell
Joshua Smith
_uham Read
Jeremiah Smith
Christopher Rape
James Steelman, Jun.
Richard Somers
Thomas Champion
William Price

It is agreed that seven make a Bord to Preceed in Bisiness. Resolved by this Bord that William Price shall undertake to fix our Guns with Bayonetts and ___ and that we ingage ___ the making of 100 Bayonits at the price currant in Phil. Don as well and as Neat. - John Somers, Pres.

January 24 1776
There rec'd of Richard Somers one quarter cask of gun powder 33 lit cask and all which I promise to keep safe, will it is called for by some of the officers of the Battalion for the Defence of the Country, they are

of bring an order from the Colonel or Lieutenant Colonel or the Committee of the Township of Egg Harbour. - James Somers

Feb 19 1776: Their Rec'd of Richard Somers two quarter casks of gun powder 33 lit hi asch cask powder and cisk and 685 shirts and 100 ___ Lead for the use of my company for the Defence of the Country which I promise to keep for that ___ and if not made use of I promise to ___ to the Towns Committee of Great Egg harbour when demanded by thee as witness my hand - John Somers

I find similar receipts signed by Capt. Jeremiah Smith
Captain Edmund Mapes
Captain Joseph Covenover
Captain Thomas Stites
Also by Joseph Scull
James Somers
Fredrick Steelman
William Price

1. Capt. Pane, 144 men
2. Capt. Smith, 75 men
3. Capt. Mapes, 54 men
4. Capt. Clark, 70 men
5. Capt. Stites, 72 men
6. Capt. Covenover, 60 men
7. Capt. John Somers, 70 men
Total, 545 Meal officers included

No. 1 - Capt. Geo Pain
James Homes, 1st Lieut.
Zephaniah Steelman, 2nd Lieut.
Nehemiah Maps, Ensign

No. 2 - Capt. Jeremiah Smith
Elias Smith, 1st Lieut.
Japhet Ireland, 2nd Lieut.
David Stillwell, Ensign

No. 3 - Capt. Edmond Maps
William Price, 1st Lieut.
Samuel Springer, 2nd Lieut.
Samuel Somers, Ensign

No. 4 - Elijah Clark, Capt.
Joseph Estell, 1st Lieut.
David Weatherbe, 2nd Lieut.

John Heratage, Ensign

No. 5 - Thomas Stites - Capt.
Constant Smith, 1st Lieut.
Thomas Springer, 2nd Lieut.
Christopher Rape, Ensign

No. 6 - Joseph Covenover, Capt.
William Read, 1st Lieut.
Jeremiah Risley, 2nd Lieut.
Nathaniel Sipples, Ensign

No. 7 - John Somers, Capt.
Samuel Snell, 1st Lieut.
James Somers, 2nd Lieut.
Robert Snell, Ensign

I said this memorandum on 1st page of book, and the draught of officers later on - F. S. Scull

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Battalion of the County of Gloucester - June 7, 1776

Capt.	1st Lieutenant	2nd Lieutenant	Ensign
1. John Somers	Zephaniah Steelman	Arthur Wescoat	Sa. Somers
George Payn	W. Reed	Richard Higbee	A. Davis
2. T. Stites	Constant Smith	T. Springer	Christopher Rape
J. Smith	David Weatherbe	S. Springer	Richard Snell
3. Joseph Covenover	Nehemiah Maps	D. Leeds	Na. Sipples
Joseph Estell	Lemuel Sayrs	Jeremeah Risley	John Doughty
4. James Homes	William Price	James Somers	David Stillwell
Edmund Maps	Samuel Snell	Japhet Ireland	Jacob Fiffer

Exact copy from Col. Richard Somers' Day Book